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Foreigners Spent $1.5Bln in Russia During World Cup, Bank Says

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Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency

Foreign visitors have reportedly spent $1.5 billion during the football World Cup over the past month in Russia.

An estimated 3 million foreigners visited the 11 host cities of the tournament this summer, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev was cited as saying by the state-run TASS news agency on Monday.

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Russia's state-owned lender Sberbank estimated that it processed around $1.5 billion in payments from foreign bank cards during the tournament, according to the RBC business portal.

The amount spent by the nationals of 194 countries doubled from the same period in 2017, when Russia hosted the FIFA Confederations Cup, Sberbank's analysis reportedly said.

According to the bank's data, Nikolskaya Ulitsa, a pedestrian street which became a de-facto epicenter of World Cup festivities in central Moscow, turned a profit of 220 million rubles, spent mostly by Chinese, Mexican and U.S. tourists during the tournament.

The 18-fold spending increase in the smallest World Cup host city of Saransk outpaced the combined growth seen in Sochi, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod, Moscow and St. Petersburg.

According to RBC, foreign visitors spent the most on accommodation, dining out and flights.

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